

REMARKS

This Supplemental Preliminary Amendment is being filed in Response to the Notice of Non-Compliance Amendment dated March 12, 2007. Reconsideration of the Notice of Non-Compliance as well as the Final Office Action of June 14, 2006 is respectively requested relative to the claims of this Supplemental Preliminary Amendment.

In the Preliminary Amendment of December 13, 2006, independent claims 5 and 6 were amended, and new independent claim 27 and dependent claim 28 were added. These same changes are incorporated in the present Supplemental Preliminary Amendment (on the assumption of entry of the December 16, 2006 amendments) together with some editorial corrections in claim 28.

In the Notice of Non-Compliance there is set forth

“the reply does not present arguments pointing out the specific distinctions believed to render the newly presented claims 27-28, patentable over any applied references.”

In response to this, Applicant provides a discussion of specific distinctions considered to exist between claim 27 and the prior art of record. Among other features, independent claim 27 includes the following language:

high-frequency electric power being supplied from the second high-frequency electric power source to the mount to generate electric fields extending vertically from the mount toward the grounded conducting member and to ignite plasmas based on the high frequency power provided to said mount while said grounded conducting member is in a state free from direct electrical connection with a high-frequency electric power source, and then, after ignition is achieved with said second high-frequency electric power source, high-frequency electric power being supplied from the first high-frequency electric power source to the antenna means is initiated to generate induced electromagnetic fields in the belljar and generate inductive coupled plasmas

Thus, as set forth in claim 27, the grounded conductor is free of direct electrical connection with a power source during plasma igniting. The Nowak reference, which is relied upon in the Office Action as a teaching of igniting the plasma by supplying high frequency power to a mount, describes on column 4, particularly lines 41-45, that for each

example given for plasma ignition involving the conductor, the conductor is powered up (with or without the pedestal being powered) and hence there is lacking a grounded conductor member that is free from electrical connection during plasma ignition involving the mount.

Further, in the rejection of claims 14-15 and 20 reliance was placed on Forster et al. as being considered as disclosing initiating capacitive coupling using a grounded conducting mount [member?] opposed to a substrate and not connected to high frequency power. A review of the disclosure in column 5 reveals that member 180 is an electrode that is connected to top winding 140C of the inductive coil 140, which is connected to RF power source 150. Thus, during plasma ignition, electrode 180 is connected electrically (that is in line or directly electrically connected) to a high frequency power source. The other references relied upon in the claim rejections are directed to other claimed features and are not considered to remedy the deficiencies in the references described above.

The claimed arrangement provides the benefit of highly focused vertical fields for igniting plasmas which is followed up with the antennae based plasma processing. Accordingly, claim 27 is submitted to patentably distinguish over the prior art of record. Claim 28 depends on claim 27 and thus is submitted to be allowable as well. Claim 28 has also been amended in this Supplemental Preliminary Amendment to remove typographical errors.

Also, prior to a first action on the merits (i.e., a non-allowance or non-Quayle type) and in accordance with MPEP 713.02 relative to the RCE filing made in the present case, an interview is respectfully requested to discuss the new combinations presented in the Final Office Action involving the newly presented Nowak reference and the current claim revisions. Applicants propose scheduling an interview following the present RCE first appearing on the Examiner's docket unless the case is deemed currently in condition for allowance.

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If any fees are due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, such as fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, please charge the fees to Deposit Account 02-4300; Order No. 033082.167

Respectfully submitted,

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